

Chapter

4

Dealing with
Diverse Student
Populations



Case Study 4.1: Making a Breakthrough

In January, Carlos, a 9-year-old boy from Puerto Rico, enters a mostly white, middle-class suburban school near a northern U.S. city. Carlos is a shy child who knows only a little English. Mrs. Hearn, the mentoring teacher, and Carol Vaughn, the student teacher, encourage the students to make Carlos feel part of the class. Sam Ray is a student teacher in another fourth-grade class.

At recess, John, an outgoing boy, asked Carlos to play kickball on his team, but Carlos refused. He told John, in broken English, that he didn't play ball. Even though a couple of boys were willing to show him how, he would not play. He moved away from the boys and stood by himself off the field.

At lunch, Hank asked Carlos if he brought his lunch, and Carlos replied, "Sí." However, when Hank invited Carlos to sit at his table, Carlos shook his head and sat down by himself.

After a week, Miss Vaughn told Mrs. Hearn that she was worried about Carlos. "He just stays by himself and looks so sad and lonely. We should be able to do something," she said.

Mrs. Hearn indicated that she was concerned about him too, but she didn't know what to do. The children had told her that he never wanted to do anything with them, so they didn't ask him anymore.

Miss Vaughn pointed out that some children laughed at Carlos because of the unusual food he brings to lunch and his strange actions. She told Mrs. Hearn that she would talk to Carlos to see how he felt about the class. When Miss Vaughn asked Carlos how he was getting along, he replied, "Not so good. Boys and girls, they no like me."

Miss Vaughn assured him that the other students liked him and wanted to be friends, but he responded, "No they don't. I no like them either." Miss Vaughn gave up on the conversation unsatisfied.

A few days later she ran into a fellow student teacher and had an idea. She asked, "Sam, aren't you teaching a unit on Mexico?"

Mr. Ray replied, "I'm right in the middle of it."

"Great!" she said. "How would you like for your students to learn some Spanish words?"

Mr. Ray liked the idea, so Miss Vaughn told him about Carlos. She said, "He is having a really hard time fitting in. I thought maybe you could ask him to help you with some Spanish words to make him feel better about himself."

Mr. Ray agreed and set a time for Carlos to visit his class.

Back in her own class, Miss Vaughn told Carlos that the class down the hall was learning about Mexico, but the teacher didn't speak Spanish. "Could you go there and tell them some Spanish words?" she asked.

Carlos was reluctant, but Miss Vaughn persisted. She got his attention when she said, "You know Spanish words, and they don't know any."

Finally, Carlos agreed to try. When he went to Mr. Ray's class, Mr. Ray introduced him and told the class, "He knows how to speak Spanish and is going to tell us some words we need to know."

One girl burst out, "Terrific! I'm working on a scrapbook. I can put in some Spanish words. Carlos, how do you say family in Spanish? How about dinner? And school?"

A boy called out, "Can you teach us how to count in Spanish?"

Several students demanded, "Say something to us in Spanish!"

Mr. Ray called the class to order, then said, "Give Carlos a chance to answer. Carlos, can you tell Jean the words she wants to know first?"

Softly Carlos said, "Sí. Word for family is *familia*. What else you want to know?"

Carlos answered more questions, gradually building confidence and volume as he proceeded. A big grin broke out on his face as he noticed how interested the students were in what he was saying.

When the period was over, Mr. Ray thanked Carlos for his help and asked him if he would come back again.

Carlos smiled shyly and replied, "Sí."

John heard about Carlos's visit to the other class from a friend and approached him again. "Hey, Carlos," he said. "I hear you've been teaching the kids down the hall to speak Spanish. How about teaching us?"

Carlos looked surprised. "Sí. If you want."

John said, "You teach us some Spanish, and we'll teach you how to play kickball. Is it a deal?"

Carlos agreed with a nod, and the boys walked off talking together.

1. Why do you think Carlos had trouble getting along with the other students in his class?
2. What were some indications that he was beginning to feel more comfortable in his new school?
3. Why did Miss Vaughn's idea about having Carlos teach Spanish to a group of children seem to help him when other attempts to help had failed?
4. Can you think of other plans that might have helped Carlos adjust to his new class?

Student teachers or practicum students are involved in important and demanding relationships with their students. Therefore, you must develop a positive and cooperative relationship with each student in your class. Don't misunderstand this relationship and try to be "buddies" with the students in order to be liked. Being liked is not sufficient for this relationship; respect is also important, as is recognition of the student teacher as an authority figure. The students' respect must be earned, and that takes time. It is not automatically accorded. Development of a "buddy" relationship can undermine the students' respect for you as an authority figure, and thus adversely affect classroom control.

What, then, should be the relationship between you and your students? An appropriate relationship will require a great deal of perceptiveness and understanding on your part.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

First, you must respect and treat each student as a worthwhile individual. That means reacting positively to all students and showing them you care about their progress and well-being. Simply learning the students' names quickly can have a positive effect on your relationships with them, as can mentioning that an absent student was missed. When students perform well, your approving comments help establish a positive relationship.

Let students know you respect them as individuals by listening to their opinions and expressions of feelings and responding to them in a way that shows you have given them careful thought. Dismissing students' ideas as trivial or worthless suggests that they are unable to contribute effectively to the class. Such actions can cause students to withdraw from the learning environment, rather than participate in classroom activities.

Nonverbal behavior can also promote good student relationships. Smile at students to show that you enjoy them. Listen to them when they voice problems, and try to help each one. Let them know that you are on their side.

To show respect for students' individuality, avoid labeling them according to racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, or gender stereotypes. Expectations should not be the same for all Asian Americans, all African Americans, all whites, all Hispanics, all people whose ancestors were of any particular nationality, all poor people, all rich people, all boys, or all girls. Each group member should be looked upon as an individual with a variety of traits acquired through interaction with the environment. As a student teacher, you help to shape some of the traits your students develop within that environment. Don't be so narrow-minded as to expect all members of a group to be alike.

Likewise, you should include in your curriculum material that represents all segments of the population.

In some classrooms, some groups of students feel marginalized because the curriculum ignores issues important to them. Glazier and Seo (2005) refer to such topics as "silenced topics" and point out that issues of social class, culture, religion, and race may be avoided because of a wish to avoid difficult and uncomfortable dialogues in class. Avoiding treatment of such topics as homelessness and poverty may further marginalize students who may already feel that they don't fit into the school culture.

SHOWING RESPECT FOR AND FAIRNESS TO ALL STUDENTS

You will find a diverse population of students when you enter the classroom. Current concerns about the need for inclusion (placing individuals with special needs in regular education settings) have resulted in many students being placed in regular classrooms, regardless of physical, intellectual, or emotional disabilities (Orlich, Harder, Callahan, Trevisan, & Brown, 2004). Students will probably be culturally diverse and range in ability from academically gifted to slow learning. Some may exhibit learning difficulties while others are physically challenged. There are likely to be students whose first language is not English. You must give your best efforts to challenge, help, provide for, and understand these students.

Instead of focusing on differences, however, recognize the many ways in which these students are alike. They have many of the same needs of acceptance, achievement, and interactions, and their interests are also likely to be similar, centering around friends, ball games, music, popular television shows or movies, and the like. You should help each student reach his or her potential and find a niche in the classroom.

You can show respect by allowing your students to take on responsibilities. Giving students tasks, no matter how small, shows that you trust them to fulfill the duties and recognize their ability to do so. This attitude can have an enormous effect upon the way a student responds to you. Case Study 4.2 shows how trusting a student worked for one student teacher.



CASE STUDY 4.2

Showing Respect for Students

Randy, a sixth-grade student, had been retained in two previous grades. As a consequence, he was a 14-year-old in a classroom with many 11- and 12-year-olds. He was larger than the other students, he was poor, and

most of his clothing was worn and faded. The heels of his boots were worn out, and his sleeves were a little too short for his arms.

Randy was generally quiet and obedient in class, but rarely made any attempt to do his assignments. He displayed an extremely negative self-concept, informing the student teacher, Miss Davis, "I'm too dumb to do that," when she encouraged him to try some of the work.

Miss Davis tried very hard to treat Randy the same way she treated the other students. She called on him to respond in class and listened respectfully to his replies. She greeted him when he entered the classroom in the morning and smiled and spoke when she passed him in the hall. In addition, she gave him much encouragement and assistance during directed study periods. Still, she felt she was making little headway. To be sure, he talked a little more in class than he had previously, and turned in a few more assignments, but Miss Davis still did not feel she had reached Randy.

One day, as Randy was leaving the classroom to go home for lunch, Miss Davis realized she needed to mail a letter and remembered that Randy passed by a mailbox on his way home. She asked him if he would mail the letter as a favor. Randy looked at her in disbelief, since nobody at school had ever trusted him to take responsibility for anything. He hesitated and said, "You want me to mail it?"

Miss Davis replied, "I'd appreciate your doing it, if you don't mind."

Randy walked over and picked up the letter, glancing around to see if others had heard this exchange. "I'll be sure it gets mailed," he told Miss Davis rather loudly, and walked out of the room proudly holding the letter.

Upon returning to the room after lunch, the first thing he told Miss Davis was, "I mailed your letter." He said it with a smile of satisfaction.

Thereafter, Randy began to respond more and more to Miss Davis's encouragement to do assignments. He seemed to try much harder to do what she thought he could do. He did not become a scholar overnight, but he improved in all his work and once even earned a 100 in mathematics. And he continued to carry Miss Davis's letters with pride.

1. What is your analysis of the way Miss Davis interacted with Randy?
2. Would you have treated the situation differently in any way?
3. Would it have been wise for Miss Davis to give a crucial piece of mail, such as a bill payment, to Randy before she was sure that he was trustworthy?

All students must receive attention; do not favor a few and ignore or avoid others. This may be difficult, because some students are not as appealing as others. Some dress carelessly or shabbily, fail to wash, or have

belligerent attitudes. Your challenge is to be equally accepting of and positive about these students' behaviors and those of the neat, clean, cooperative students. Although you should not accept behavior that deviates from school rules, you should show acceptance of the individual, regardless of her or his behavior. You should also find traits in each person to which you can react positively. Strive to establish a sense of community in your classroom in which all students can feel they are valued members.

To have a good relationship with your students, fairness is important. Establish routines and procedures and expect all students to follow them. Any hint that you have "teacher's pets" will cause poor relationships between you and the majority of the class.

Honesty is also important in your student relationships. Students quickly recognize insincerity and resent it.

Therefore, to establish good relationships with students, you should do the following:

1. Treat each student as a worthwhile individual, worthy of respect.
2. Use appropriate nonverbal behavior in your student interactions.
3. Avoid labels and stereotypes when working with students.
4. Offer students chances to take on responsibilities.
5. Give attention to all students.
6. Be positive toward all students.
7. Be fair to all students.
8. Be honest with all students.

AVOIDING SEXISM

In the past in the United States, many activities (such as cooking and sewing) were considered to be female pursuits, whereas other activities (such as taking care of car maintenance and mowing the lawn) were seen as male pursuits. Men often had jobs as managers or jobs that involved heavy lifting and much physical activity. Women were generally expected to be homemakers. If they chose to work, they were expected to take jobs as secretaries, receptionists, and teachers. Young boys were expected to be active, participating in sports and climbing trees. Young girls were expected to be more passive, playing with dolls and participating in quiet activities like coloring pictures. Boys were expected to be tough and not cry, whereas girls were expected to be delicate and to cry when things went wrong. Long hair was primarily associated with females and very short hair with males. Women and girls were expected to wear dresses, jewelry, and makeup. Boys were often allowed to dress more casually in jeans when girls were still expected to wear skirts.

Currently, it is not unusual to find male and female students in identical clothes. Male students are as likely to have long hair as female students, and many female students prefer very short hair styles. Students of both sexes wear necklaces and earrings. Both males and females are involved in sports, as well as less active pursuits. Girls may help their parents with yard work, and boys may spend time cooking. In most cases, jobs are open to qualified people of either sex.

Attitude changes have come slowly, but they have occurred. Current attitudes of the majority favor equal opportunities and expectations for boys and girls in today's society. Yet some people hold onto a belief in traditional roles for males and females. Case Study 4.3 shows how one teacher's beliefs were in conflict with the attitudes of some of her students.



CASE STUDY 4.3

Gender Stereotypes

Miss Chambers, a student teacher in a fifth-grade class that was studying Mexico, thought that staging a fiesta would be a good teaching device, because it would give the children an opportunity to sample many Mexican foods. She told the boys to plan and construct a set to look like a festive Mexican home, while the girls located and prepared the foods to be tried. Darren, who liked to cook at home, wanted to prepare the tamales. Miss Chambers responded, "It's better if all of you boys work on construction."

1. What is your analysis of Miss Chambers's reply to Darren?
2. What would you have said?
3. Do you suppose some of the girls might have enjoyed the construction project better than the cooking?
4. How would you have handled the entire project?

Unfortunately, gender stereotypes, such as the one Miss Chambers demonstrated, are still found in some places. Certain activities, toys, and manners of speaking are arbitrarily attributed to boys and others to girls. Grant and Cooper (2003) assert that students should be encouraged to participate in activities that have previously been associated with the opposite sex, if they show an interest in them.

You should avoid sexist practices when you choose materials and work with male and female students. Sexist practices can restrict what a person becomes by limiting behavior and career choices. Congress enacted Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 to prohibit discrimination against males or females in

federally assisted education programs. Even though it is no longer legal to discriminate, many people continue to do so through their attitudes toward gender roles.

Some of the gender differences that appear to exist may be the result of different cultural expectations for boys and girls as they grow up. You may inadvertently be helping to maintain different expectations, rather than helping both boys and girls recognize the breadth of their behavioral and career choices. Boys should be permitted to cook and sew, as well as perform carpentry. They should also be allowed to show emotions, ask for help, enjoy quiet activities like reading, and be gentle and cooperative without having their masculinity questioned. On the other hand, girls should be encouraged to engage in athletic activities or use computers and to study math and science if they hold such interests, because this acknowledges that they may want to enter technical fields requiring knowledge of these subjects. You should encourage boys to read, because success in almost every aspect of life and work depends to some degree on reading proficiency. In order to accomplish this, you need to expose boys to reading materials that match their needs and interests (Taylor, 2004/2005). Orlich and others (2004) point out the need for you, as a teacher, to provide leadership opportunities for students of both sexes.

Both men and women are found in careers, such as nursing and construction work, that were once considered the domain of a particular sex. Therefore, a girl who wants to be an airplane pilot should be given as much reinforcement as a boy who wants the same thing.

In addition, girls and boys should receive equal attention from you. All students need to be given chances to respond and receive teacher feedback.

Your language may unintentionally support sexist stereotypes. When the builders of our nation are referred to as forefathers, for example, young children may feel that women had no part. Use of the generic *he* may also cause young, and even adolescent, students to assume that only males are the topic of conversation. Terms such as *mailman* and *policeman* seem to close the careers of letter carriers and police officers to females. You should be aware of the effects of word usage on students' perceptions.

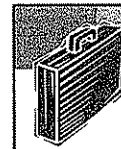
DEALING WITH CULTURAL DIVERSITY

You are likely to teach culturally diverse classes. Therefore, you must help each student develop a positive cultural identity and accept classmates with other cultural backgrounds. According to Sumida and Meyer (2006, p. 445), "Culture as education is about caring for our

children in order to *draw out* their potentials and acknowledge the deepest wellspring from which our children create and make meaning." Students need opportunities to read material by and about people from their own cultural backgrounds and from a variety of other backgrounds. This will help them see that people from other cultures are like them in many ways: they often share similar dreams, emotions, and experiences. Students also need help in understanding why some differences exist and learning to value those differences for their contributions to our nation and the world.

Teachers in culturally diverse classrooms should direct attention to the contributions and values of all represented cultures, as well as some that are not. This allows students to feel a part of the educational experience and to experience an increased sense of self-worth. In social studies classes, for example, inclusion of such material should be a natural occurrence. Emphasize contributions to our society, other societies, and the world at large made by people from different cultures, as well as difficulties faced by these people, as you teach history, geography, political science, and current events. In science, emphasize scientific contributions of people from varying cultures. You may need to point out the cultural background of the scientist in question; otherwise, the students may simply assume that the person was from their own culture or a culture stereotypically expected to produce scientists. In literature, include selections by and about people from different cultures. You should choose classroom materials that are free of cultural bias.

You may also want to locate books in the primary languages of your English language learners (ELLs); the Internet can help you locate appropriate books. For example, the About.com site offers a link to the International Children's Digital Library, which has more than 1,500 free children's books, written in 37 different languages (including English, Persian, Farsi, Danish, Mongolian, Finnish, German, Arabic, Portuguese, Swahili, Serbian, Spanish, Yiddish, Filipino, Tagalog, and Turkish) available online and has a link to a Guide to Selecting Children's and YA Books About Native Americans. The Center for the Study of Books in Spanish for Children and Adolescents' website, http://www.csusm.edu/campus_centers/csb/, can help you locate books in Spanish, as well as books about Latinos. *El Fragmento* by Linda Sue Park (translated by Margarita Cavándoli) (RBA Libros, 2003) is a translation of *A Single Shard* set in Korea, which would allow students to read the book in Spanish and/or English as a part of a novel study that would also introduce Korean culture. *Salvador Dali* by Robert Anderson is a book in English about an important Spanish painter, and *Goya y el Dos de Mayo* by Fernando Marias is a book in Spanish about



FOR YOUR PORTFOLIO

INTASC Standard: 3 (See page 19)

Include a copy of Activity 4.1 in your portfolio, along with evidence of adjustments in materials that you made, if any were needed, to help combat any cultural bias that you detected.

another famous painter. Bilingual Books for Kids at <http://www.bilingualbooks.com/> offers books in Spanish and English, such as the picture book *Spicy, Hot Colors/Colores Picantes*.

Use a search engine to find sites for books about different cultures, by authors and illustrators from different cultures, or written in different languages. (Complete Activity 4.1 to see how your instructional materials rate in this area.)

On special occasions, students from different cultural backgrounds should be allowed to explain, if they wish, how those occasions differ for them or how they celebrate similar things at different times of the year. Special attention to the effects that Columbus's landing in the New World had on the indigenous people could be given on Columbus Day, for example. In addition, consideration of the points of view that groups such as the Tories, Native Americans, British, and French had toward the American Revolution may be appropriate in expanding multicultural awareness and understanding.

In classrooms with little or no cultural diversity, an even more urgent need exists to make students aware of the ways in which people may be different from them, while sharing some characteristics with them. They need to realize that all kinds of people have influenced their world. Printed materials, as well as multimedia resources, will help make the discussions of other cultures vivid and complete. It is important to make the students' languages and cultural backgrounds a part of your classroom (López-Robertson, 2006).

Understanding of the culture or cultures represented in your classroom is very important for you as a student teacher. For example, a child from one culture may look down and fail to meet your eyes as a sign of respect, but your cultural background may cause you to interpret this action negatively. One beginning teacher was upset when she saw a group of Navaho children helping each other on a test. She interpreted their actions as cheating, but in their culture, cooperation and helping others are considered desirable. However, there is much diversity within cultural groups, and you should not expect all students from a particular group to respond to the same situation in a similar manner.

Students differ in their ancestry, language, religion, physical characteristics, or customs. Some are not native to the United States. Some come from the inner city, the suburbs, or from more isolated rural areas, such as parts of Southern Appalachia. Various groups exist within a larger, dominant society, and they often exhibit different language patterns, attitudes, or behaviors from those in the mainstream population. You must take care not to ignore the inclusion of white Americans in the discussion of cultures. Some teachers have assumed that only people of color should receive focus in multicultural education, leaving many mainstream students to feel "cultureless" (Glazier & Seo, 2005). Don't forget to discuss the diversity within this culture, as well.

You need to be aware of and sensitive to the special needs of the culturally diverse students in your classroom, and respect their different ethnic, racial, and geographic backgrounds. While some students have no problems with their differences, others feel insecure and ill at ease in a different culture. You should respond to students with adjustment problems in helpful and constructive ways. In some classrooms ELLs tend to remain silent because they are excluded unintentionally from learning activities because the activities are based on U.S. popular culture with which they are unfamiliar, such as U.S. football. (This can also be a problem for students from other countries who speak English well.) You should plan activities that offer ELLs a chance to participate and facilitate such participation by encouraging them to share parallel experiences from their own cultures; for example, they could describe how soccer is an important sport in their country (Yoon, 2007). You can also offer encouragement to participate by building some assignments "that allow children to share family and community experiences" (Mays, 2008, p. 417). Allowing discussions in small groups may reduce reluctance to speak in class (Yoon, 2007).

When teaching content area lessons, you may need to frontload your instruction or the reading material with teaching of the key vocabulary and language structures in the material. This facilitates activation of background knowledge and provides opportunities for questioning that can clarify concepts before reading or other informational input takes place (Harper & Jong, 2004).

Several strategies are available to encourage students to accept peers who have different cultural origins. Role-playing can help students understand how it feels to be a member of a different cultural group. Assigning children of different heritages to work together on a committee helps them realize that each member of the group can make an important contribution. You can create other situations in which problems can be solved only through the cooperation of each member of a culturally mixed group.

Culturally different students need to acquire the values and behaviors essential for success in the dominant society while retaining important aspects of their own subcultures. Whereas you cannot do a great deal to further this ideal in a short period of time, your awareness of cultural differences, your attitudes toward your students, and the focus of your lessons can make a difference (see Activity 4.1 on page 51).

Your knowledge of the languages and cultures of various groups, such as Hispanics, African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and European Americans, can be valuable. However, you must be aware that each of these broad divisions represents many separate ethnic groups. For example, Asian Americans represent Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and others. Each of these groups has its separate culture and subcultures. Hispanics in the United States represent ethnic groups from Mexico, Central America, South America, and other regions, and each of these regions also has many different cultures represented.

You cannot make sweeping generalizations about Asians, Hispanics, or other cultures. Yet research reveals typical learning patterns exist within certain cultural subgroups in each large designation. Because Latino cultures generally value interactions among family members, the children tend to be taught to work together and be helpful to others. Therefore, instead of expecting all independent work, try letting students work in pairs, do choral reading, and discuss answers to homework questions before writing them on their own. Because each school setting will have a different cultural mix, try to familiarize yourself with the cultural backgrounds of the specific students you are assigned to teach. In addition, many Mexican Americans seek close personal relationships with their teachers and prefer learning general concepts to learning specific facts; many African Americans like discussion, collaborative work, and active projects; and many Native-American students value quiet times for thinking, cooperation with others, and the use of visual stimuli for creating images. Remember, however, that variations among students within any cultural group are as great as similarities, so do not over-generalize (Guild, 1994). There are even differences between students from a particular cultural group who have been in the United States for different numbers of generations (Pataray-Ching, with Kitt-Hinrichs & Nguyen, 2006).

Multicultural Education

Multicultural education affirms the value of various groups within the schools. Supporters of multicultural education believe that material related to a wide variety of cultures should be an integral part of the curriculum, beginning in kindergarten and continuing throughout

ACTIVITY 4.1 | Checking for Cultural Bias and Stereotypes in Instructional Materials

1. Are a variety of cultures represented in the illustrations in the materials? _____
2. Are a variety of cultures represented in the written texts of the materials? _____
3. In the illustrations, are the people from any particular cultures shown in stereotyped occupations or activities? _____ If so, which ones? _____

4. In the written texts, are the people from any particular cultures described or represented in stereotyped occupations or activities? _____ If so, which ones? _____

5. From what cultures do the main characters in stories or featured characters in expository text come? _____

6. Are any of the materials written by people from other cultures? _____ If so, which ones? _____

7. Are any of the materials illustrated by people from other cultures? _____ If so, which ones? _____

8. What do the results of your analysis of the instructional materials in your classroom indicate that you need to do in order to provide your students with positive multicultural experiences?

the other grades. In social studies, have students study world events from different perspectives. Instead of having the students consider only prevalent U.S. views, you can lead them to consider how people from other countries view international events. In literature, have students read stories with varied cultural content. You can also incorporate multicultural themes into art, music, science, mathematics, and physical education.

In one high school, instruction in world issues was a required part of the curriculum. One teacher, working with a university, used multicultural literature as the way to investigate Communist China during the Cultural Revolution. The novella used was translated from Chinese and depicted the treatment of an artist who had graduated at the top of his class in the Academy of Fine Arts in the capital of China. This highly educated man was made to work in an obscure job in a rural area. The teacher began by providing information about the Chinese Cultural Revolution through a variety of activities, including simulation, interactive lectures, videos, and analysis of propaganda posters used by the Chinese communists. Each student then wrote an essay to show his or her knowledge of the historical, social, and cultural background for China at the time of the novella. The students discussed the novella as they read and wrote in journals to articulate their understanding. At the end the students developed a timeline of the protagonist's emotional reactions throughout the story. They learned about "reeducation" of intellectuals and others who might oppose Chairman Mao and the communist government, and they saw how the people could have been brainwashed to think that they must all think alike and be good workers for the country. After this opportunity to see another political system in action, many of the students expressed their appreciation for the rights and freedom allowed to citizens of the United States. They pointed out that they had never seen examples of what different political and cultural systems were like until their last year of school (Louie, 2005).

Another way to have students learn about other cultures is through cross-cultural pen pal letter exchanges. These letters can be sent through regular mail or e-mail, where e-mail is available (Barksdale, Watson, & Park, 2007). These exchanges can work for students in any grade level.

A much less effective approach some teachers take to multicultural education is the "heroes and holidays" observance. Two or three times during the year, certain periods are set aside to celebrate a particular event related to a specific culture. For example, at Thanksgiving children may dress as Native Americans and construct teepees, or in observance of Martin Luther King's death, students might prepare a "soul food" meal. Such

observances do little to promote understanding of other cultures, but rather reinforce misconception and stereotypes, such as the impression that all Native Americans dressed alike and lived in teepees in the past and that all African Americans eat the same foods. As student teacher, you should consider taking a more meaningful approach to multicultural education.

Multicultural content in the curriculum can offer relevant reading material for students of particular ethnic groups. Many African-American students will be more interested in reading stories about Harriet Tubman's heroic efforts to free slaves or George Washington Carver's ingenuity in finding ways to use peanuts than about situations not involving African American characters. When students have greater interest, they will be more enthusiastic about learning.

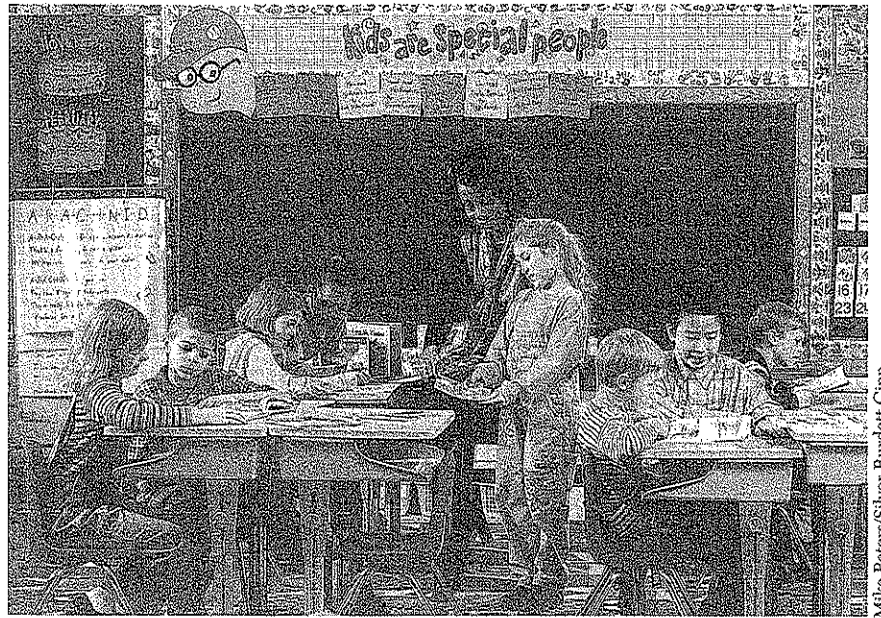
In recognition of the learning preferences of non-mainstream cultural groups, Coelho (1994) recommends including cooperative learning groups and exploratory talk in your instructional planning. These

groups should be multicultural. Many studies indicate that cooperative learning is particularly beneficial for minority students, for promoting race relations, and for enhancing self-esteem. These students also need an orderly, safe environment; focus on reading, writing, and math; continual feedback on academic progress; and the knowledge that you hold high expectations for them and offer recognition for academic success.

Be conscious of ways to use multicultural content in your lessons. Keep in mind that multicultural education involves more than occasionally adding a bit of information about a minority group to your lessons. It means presenting material from a global perspective that values the contributions and cultures of each group.

DEALING WITH LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

The students in most classrooms are linguistically diverse. The students speak different languages and/or different dialects of the same language. In one Midwestern U.S. school, English language learners spoke Spanish, Hebrew, Arabic, Berber, French, Portuguese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Russian. Some spoke more than one of these languages (Laman & Van Sluys, 2008). Some may speak no English; some may know very little English; and some may speak nonstandard dialects of English. You must adjust your instruction to help each of these groups of students have positive learning experiences. You should take care not to assume levels of intelligence or other personal characteristics strictly on the basis of a student's first language, dialect, or accent, for doing so can lead to many misconceptions. Study of language diversity



Mike Peters/Silver Burdett Ginn

Students with culturally different heritages may be assigned to work together.

as a part of your curriculum can be as helpful to mainstream English speakers as to students who have different language backgrounds (Zuidema, 2005).

English Language Learners (ELLs)

Every year, many non-English speakers or individuals with limited English proficiency enter the United States from a variety of nations. Educators work to increase immigrant students' motivation and self-esteem in a safe, low-stress environment (Miller & Endo, 2004). Your students will take behavioral cues from you. Your positive attention to ELLs and acceptance by their classmates can have an important impact on students, such as happened with Carlos in Case Study 4.1 at the beginning of the chapter.

Even if some of your students speak little or no English and you do not speak their language, you can relate positively to such students. When these students first enter an English-speaking school, they often go through a silent period. During this period they listen to and learn from those around them before attempting language usage (Krashen, 1982; Pataray-Ching, with Kitt-Hinrichs & Nguyen, 2006). From the first moment they enter the classroom, include these students in classroom activities, especially those that require little language. These activities may include playing active games, drawing and painting, and viewing displays and demonstrations.

Students who exclusively speak a language other than English need to learn English quickly in order to benefit from the educational experiences offered in an English-speaking school. Don't be too concerned

about these students acquiring mastery of English grammar rules. ELLs learn English best through hearing it in normal conversations and read-alouds of literature, seeing it in classroom materials, and using it purposefully in actual classroom activities, rather than through a grammar-based instructional approach. Much language learning occurs during social interactions among students.

You can communicate with each student through gestures, pictures, and any words you know from her or his language. Encourage other students to include a new student in their activities, explaining that they can make the new student comfortable by helping him or her learn the standard procedures and popular activities. Students often translate for one another and use nonverbal communication along with language usage. This helps students communicate in informal settings before the ELLs have a strong grasp of conversational English.

You should refer to a foreign-language dictionary when communicating with students who are learning English. For students who read in their first languages fluently, you should provide dictionaries with English equivalents of familiar words for them.

In the primary grades, you can construct a picture dictionary of English words for such students. You may make use of pictures and concrete objects to supply needed vocabulary words. For example, you may show a student a picture of a dog or an actual dog and point to the picture or animal while saying the word *dog*. For students who have some literacy skills in their first language, you may write the English words for the pictures and let the students write the words in their primary languages.

Coloring books and picture books were successfully used with an 8-year-old child from Thailand, whose vocabulary grew rapidly due to her desire to communicate. Classmates spent countless free hours identifying objects in these books for her, listening to her repeat their names, and helping her correct her pronunciation. In return, she translated the items into her own language for her highly receptive classmates. The result was mutual respect and enjoyment. Grant and Cooper (2003) point out that the students' own language should be used as an instructional resource, as was done in this case.

When providing information or giving directions in class, teachers can explain the material in simpler terms for ELLs or rewrite the material in simpler words and shorter sentences. They can also preteach any difficult vocabulary terms (Miller & Endo, 2004). As the teacher, it is your job to scaffold the social and academic language of the ELLs in your class, support them in elaborating on contributions, and encourage them to ask questions about things they don't understand so that they may participate actively in classroom discussion (Mohr & Mohr, 2007).

You may want to assign buddies, such as students who speak the new students' languages, to students who speak little or no English. Including new students in classroom activities in which they can listen to English being used is also a good practice. Garcia (2002, p. 356) found "use of a thematic curriculum and collaborative, small group instruction to be helpful." You may allow students who have achieved some literacy in their primary language to write in that language at first, with the purpose of having them express their knowledge of content as clearly as possible. When their grasp of English has improved, you may encourage them to begin writing in English, using phonetic spelling and drawings to express meanings, if necessary. You should not penalize them for mixing English and their primary language as they write and speak, because this may simply cause them to become silent and resist risk-taking as they try to incorporate English into their linguistic knowledge. Laman and Van Sluys (2008) studied classrooms in which students were encouraged to choose the language to use to fit their writing purposes, and this approach was successful. As the students learn English, they can help familiarize other students with a second language, as Carlos did in his school and as the Thai girl did in her class.

You can enhance your students' English literacy learning by providing a literature-rich classroom, with books and print in a variety of languages. It is particularly helpful to provide books that have their content written in more than one language. Good literature

selections provide models for students' own writing attempts. English books and bilingual books that present the material in the students' home language and English can offer students models of English syntax and vocabulary (Laman & Van Sluys, 2008).

More detail on helping ELLs acquire literacy skills is found in Chapter 9: "Developing and Using Literacy and Other Language Arts Strategies Across the Curriculum." Adaptations for ELLs are included as they apply in other chapters.

Be aware that bilingualism can be an advantage to students when they receive support and maintenance of their first languages while they learn English. The benefits include cognitive flexibility, superior language skills, and additidual gains (Lenters, 2004/2005).



CASE STUDY 4.4

Learning English Through Collaboration

Lori, Mr. Chowdhuri's student teacher, observed that there were several Korean students in her second-grade class. Although they were eager to learn English and were making good progress, Lori wanted to help them feel more comfortable with their new language.

Aware of the benefits of cooperative learning for many language-minority students, Lori decided to form groups, each of which would include a Korean child, so far as possible. Lori knew the children loved the big books that Mr. Chowdhuri shared with them during reading lessons, so she asked each group to make an original big book to share with the rest of the class. Since the children were enthusiastic about the project, Lori got the supplies they needed and let them get to work.

As she listened in on the groups, she heard the children eagerly suggesting ideas. The Korean children listened carefully, joined in, and gladly accepted the corrections in language usage that their native-English-speaking peers offered. Whewon was especially full of ideas, and Lori noticed that he wanted to dictate the text. As he spoke the lines, group members approved his ideas, but sometimes changed verb endings and word order to correspond with English usage.

As a result of this collaboration, the Korean children learned many of the fine points of English—without a grammar book and in a mutually satisfying endeavor. Lori felt that she had taken a big step toward realizing her goal.

1. What are some other ways to help language-minority children learn English in a constructive, purposeful way?

2. If you are teaching in upper elementary grades, middle school, or high school, could you use aspects of this approach in your own class? What adjustments would you have to make to use a similar approach in your own teaching situation?
3. Compare the advantages of teaching English to non-English speakers through purposeful conversation rather than grammar rules.

English language learners are often expected to translate English into their home language for family members who do not speak English. Therefore, they are often highly motivated to learn from you and their classmates. Allowing them to write or speak in their home language and then translate their writing into English can be seen as a practical activity by these students.

The largest group of English language learners in the United States is the Hispanic population. A problem that many of these students have is the differences in the sound-symbol correspondences in English and Spanish. Teachers should familiarize themselves with the two sound systems and begin instruction by emphasizing the letter-sound correspondences that are the same, allowing them to transfer their knowledge in their first language to English. Each sound-symbol feature should be taught explicitly. Sound-symbol correspondences that differ in the two languages should get extra attention (Helman, 2004). Spanish has a greater consistency in sound-symbol associations than does English, but it does have some deviations from regularity (Pérez Cañado, 2005).

Similarities between a student's first language and English can often be helpful, but with some languages the similarities are less numerous than in others. Similarities are easier to find in other Indo-European languages. Nevertheless, even a Semitic language such as Arabic, which uses a different alphabet and is read from right to left instead of left to right, has some commonalities that can lead to positive transfer effects. For example, English and Arabic are both alphabetic systems that are based on sound-symbol associations, and they both indicate verb tenses. The differences between English and Arabic are greater than the similarities, however (Palmer, El-Ashry, Leclerc, & Chang, 2007).

Research shows that ELLs benefit from good models of oral English, comprehensible input in English, practice and feedback with English, and direct instruction in phonics and other reading skills within a language-rich instructional plan. They can profitably engage in meaning-centered language activities. They need much attention to academic language instruction, especially academic vocabulary instruction (Manyak, 2007; Manyak, 2008; Manyak & Bauer, 2008). Academic language includes "complex syntax, academic

vocabulary, and a complex discourse style" and "the content of subjects such as algebra, history, literature, etc." (Krashen & Brown, 2007, p. 1).

Students Who Speak Nonstandard Dialects

Some of the students in your class are likely to speak nonstandard dialects of English. Part of your job as a teacher is to expose these students to standard English, since most employment opportunities require it. You must model standard English for students and reinforce its use in school settings without discrediting their home language. In other words, the home language should be treated as one communication system and standard English ("school language") as an alternative system. Students should not be reprimanded for using their home language in informal settings, but they should practice standard English in formal situations, such as giving oral reports and producing written reports. All teachers must approach this task with understanding and sensitivity.

CHALLENGING THE GIFTED STUDENT

Students can be gifted in many ways, such as academically, athletically, musically, and artistically. These students need the opportunity to develop their gifts to the fullest extent possible. Teachers may plan for incorporation of students' special gifts in class activities, whenever possible.

Academically Gifted Students

Academically gifted students often make much faster academic progress in a year than do average students. Usually, they have some of these characteristics:

1. Interest in books and reading
2. Large vocabularies and the ability to express themselves verbally in a mature manner
3. Curiosity and long attention spans
4. High levels of abstract thinking
5. Wide ranges of interests

Whereas academically gifted students are able to direct many of their own activities, some direction from the teacher is needed. Marty Williams taught a minicourse in geometry to gifted fourth–sixth graders. They learned the three basic shapes; the concepts of proximity, separation, order, and enclosure; the Platonic Solids and Euler's formula; and picturing and creating two- and three-dimensional objects. In the class the students moved from use of concrete objects to abstract thinking. They were involved actively with

FIGURE 4-1

Sample Activity for Gifted Students File

BOX O' BALLADS

Have a copy available of Carl Sandburg's book *The American Songbag*. Provide time and materials for students to do one of the following related projects after discussing and enjoying some of the ballads:

1. Draw a panorama representing one of the cowboy ballads.
2. Write some imaginative ballads of your own about the pioneers or the railroad workers.
3. Create a shoe-box diorama representing one of the lumberjack ballads.
4. Plan and present a short creative drama representing the ballad of your choice.
5. Read in several sources about the historical period represented and prepare a report.

the concepts, using their bodies and their classmates' bodies to demonstrate proximity, separation, order, and enclosure. They also had mathematical brain-teasers as follow-up activities for the lessons.

Within the school program, look for opportunities to challenge these students. Here are some ideas.

1. Make available a wide selection of resource materials.
2. Develop theme studies that provide opportunities for in-depth and long-term learning experiences.
3. Create a kit of challenging problems, puzzles, riddles, and the like.
4. Support students in creating and directing their own projects.
5. Encourage students to prepare oral and written reports on current theme studies.
6. Place academically gifted students in cooperative learning groups where they can work with many other students.

As a student teacher, you should begin collecting a file of creative and unusual ideas to use with gifted students. Figure 4-1 is an example of a type of activity you may want to save in your file.

Educational opportunities beyond regular classroom instruction may be available for gifted students in your school. These options may include special programs outside the classroom, use of resource teachers, minicourses, summer programs, independent study, advanced placement, community programs, curriculum compacting, advanced courses available on the Internet, and study groups. In addition, your school system may have a special teacher for the gifted and talented, who can give you a great deal of help with materials and program planning. In Case Study 4.5 Sandy Smith describes one program for which she was a facilitator and system-wide administrator.

**CASE STUDY 4.5**

A Program for Academically Gifted Students

Each summer approximately 70 academically gifted and talented students in grades K-8 assembled for two weeks for a special system-wide enrichment camp. Classroom teachers from a number of different schools within the system, paired as team teachers, worked collaboratively to develop a series of project-based experiences around an identified theme. Some of the most popular themes were *Time: Past, Present, and Future*; *Our Heritage and Our History*; and *Mysteries and Marvels*.

The curriculum was interrelated and addressed several content areas, including science, technology, math, and the language arts. It was always a priority to include components of the performing arts, as well as to integrate music and art. Students were actively involved in hands-on activities, individual and small group presentations, and performances that often served as a form of culminating activity for the entire group.

At the end of the camp, student, parent, and staff evaluations were collected and reviewed. There were always comments such as "Why can't real school be more like this?" "This is the first time I thought school could be fun, not boring." "You made learning and working together, FUN. I can't wait until next summer."

Analysis of program: Not only was the summer enrichment class beneficial for the student participants, as a facilitator and system-wide administrator, I began to observe changes in classroom practices when I would visit the classrooms of those teachers who participated as summer instructors. The camp served as a powerful professional development activity for those involved. They were introduced to best practices for academically gifted and talented students and were taking those practices

back to their classrooms and using them to provide a more differentiated curriculum.

1. Is there a program for gifted students in your school? If so, how does it compare to the one in this case study?
2. Would you like to work in a program like the one described above? Why, or why not?

Athletically Gifted Students

Athletically gifted students in most secondary schools and many elementary schools have opportunities to develop their skills in physical education classes or on school sports teams. They must be given the assistance needed to accomplish their goals in other classes in order to remain eligible to play on school teams. They often need help with time management and study skills to aid their study in academic subjects because of the time demands of practice for sports teams.

If you have experience and/or special skills with athletic pursuits, you may want to volunteer to help with one of the school's sports teams, its cheerleading squad, or activities in physical education classes or supervised recess activities. Such participation can give you needed experience in working with these students and can help you learn about them and build rapport with them.

Musically Gifted Students

Many schools have opportunities for musically gifted students to develop their gifts through band, orchestra, or chorus classes. Some elementary schools have music teachers who provide music classes for each class each week. However, in some elementary schools, the only music instruction or implementation is done by the classroom teacher.

If you have experience and/or expertise in the field of music, you may want to volunteer to work with one of the existing classes or conduct the music class in an elementary school that does not have a regular music teacher. You can also integrate music into other classes that you teach. In history classes, you may introduce the music that was prevalent during a particular time period or in a particular area of the world through performance or recordings. Elementary school students enjoy learning to sing folk songs and popular songs from different time periods and from different cultures. Protest songs that accompanied particular causes, advertising jingles and pairing of ads with certain types of popular music, work songs, and songs related to particular recreational pursuits could be used at various times. In an English class you might examine the meanings of lyrics of popular songs, carefully chosen for acceptable content, of course, or you might have students participate in writing songs for particular purposes. In math class you might discuss the

values of various notes in music and the purpose of the time signatures. In science class, you could discuss how different pitches are obtained with various instruments, including the voice.

Artistically Gifted Students

Many schools have formal art classes in drawing, painting, sculpture, a variety of crafts, or performance arts. In elementary schools students may be taught by an art teacher who teaches each class each week, or the classroom teacher may have the responsibility for this instruction.

If you are skilled in any of the areas of visual or performance arts, you may want to work with one of the established classes, or provide a class of your own, especially if the school has no special teacher for your specialty and the classroom teacher does not have sufficient expertise in that area. The arts can also be incorporated into other classes. Improvised or scripted scenes may be enacted from history, or students may write and/or perform creative dramatic or theatrical dramatic renditions of stories that have been read. Reports in all areas can be illustrated with students' drawings, paintings, sculptures, or dioramas. Elementary students who are artistic will enjoy illustrating math problems with pictures, rather than merely lines or circles. Students at all levels can develop posters and advertisements for school activities, such as athletic events, open houses for parents, plays, band concerts, and fall festivals.

HELPING THE STUDENT WHO IS ACADEMICALLY CHALLENGED

Students who are academically challenged are generally performing academically below the levels of others who are the same age. You will have to make some adjustments for instructing these students, such as:

1. Strategically scaffolding for each learning task
2. Moving through instructional material gradually and thoroughly
3. Developing ideas with concrete, manipulative, and visually oriented materials, such as videos, classroom demonstrations, and related artifacts
4. Using simplified materials
5. Varying activities to accommodate short attention spans
6. Relating learning to real-life experiences (such as school, lunchroom, gymnasium, current events, community projects, and holiday celebrations)
7. Providing for large amounts of practice to master new learning
8. Reviewing with closely spaced, cumulative exercises to encourage retention

If a student who is academically challenged is having difficulty with a particular concept or idea, you may need to use scaffolding exercises and materials, such as the one shown in Figure 4-2.

It is important for all students to experience success in some way—perhaps through athletics, art, or some other talent or skill. In one experimental program, ninth-grade struggling readers in a remedial reading class, many of whom were upset at being placed in a remedial class, were given the option of participating in a tutoring program in which they would tutor second- and third-grade struggling readers in their community. One of these students was also in an English-as-a-second-language class. While they were receiving instruction in reading strategies in their own class, including how to read storybooks expressively, they were also taught how to tutor the younger students. They started with lesson plans that were provided to them, but they later developed lesson plans of their own. They taught units of phonics, context clues, sight words, predicting, questioning,

and summarizing, among other reading strategies. The ninth graders bonded with their students, and their self-esteem increased as they saw that the younger students looked up to them and were learning from them. Both the ninth graders and their young students increased their reading ability (Paterson & Elliott, 2006).

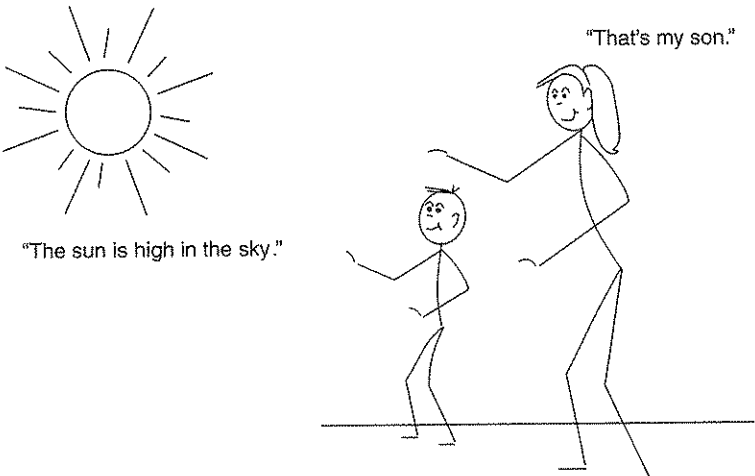
Some ideas for teaching academically challenged learners are offered in Chapter 9 under the heading "Reading Proficiency and School Assignments." Many of these students are also struggling readers who improve more when they spend more time with expert teachers, making individualized instruction an important form of intervention (Fisher & Ivey, 2006).

To develop and maintain positive attitudes toward school subjects, provide students who are academically challenged with situations that relate not only to their experiences, but also to the real world in which they live. Identify basic life skills, and relate them to subject content. For example, in math, teach skills related to such everyday tasks as reading price tags, calendars,

FIGURE 4-2

Sample Scaffolding Activity for Students Who Are Academically Challenged

If you're still having trouble with these words . . .



"The sun is high in the sky."

sun
A
son
B

1. Do sun and son sound alike?
2. What is different in the spelling of the words?
3. Draw a picture to fit these sentences.
 - a. The sun is shining.
 - b. Mother is with her son.
4. Write a sentence using the word sun. Then write a sentence using the word son.
5. Circle the picture word that fits these sentences.
 - a. The _____ was behind the clouds.
(sun, son)
 - b. Bill is Mr. Brown's _____.
(sun, son)

road maps, recipes, coupons, timetables, thermometers, clocks, and sales slips; understanding money values and measurement units; and making change. You can present subject matter concepts through such readily available materials as newspapers and magazines, "how-to" books, telephone directories, mail-order catalogs, television guides, scouting manuals, menus, greeting cards, hobby materials, food and medicine containers, road signs, and nature guides.

Some secondary school programs focus instruction for the student who is academically challenged on practical applications, such as planning a budget; filling out job applications; learning social skills needed in family and job situations; and using independent living skills, such as food preparation, home management, attention to personal hygiene practices, and safety practices. Other functional curriculum programs incorporate career education, specific vocational skills, or on-the-job training in certain areas.

PROVIDING FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Students with learning disabilities usually demonstrate a significant discrepancy between intellectual potential and actual level of performance. They have some degree of difficulty learning in one or more subjects, but they are usually average or above average in intelligence, and not visually or hearing impaired or educationally deprived.

The following guidelines may help you understand how to work with students at all levels who have learning disabilities.

1. Increase attention span by removing distractions, including any materials other than those necessary for the assigned task.
2. Teach the student how to organize his or her desk, belongings, and materials.
3. Try to improve one behavior at a time, rewarding appropriate behavior and involving the student in recording progress.
4. Carefully create a positive learning environment and tasks with specific standards, limits, and rules, and be consistent in your expectations.
5. Assign one task at a time, at first using a step-by-step procedure. Use short, sequential assignments, with breaks between tasks.
6. Find a variety of media to present content (such as computer programs, videos, audio recordings, and transparencies), and use active methods (such as simulation games, experiments, and role-playing) as instructional strategies.
7. Encourage expectation of success at the tasks.
8. Provide students with immediate and frequent feedback on their successes.

9. Use literature selections that mirror challenges that they have; for example: Jan Greenberg's *Chuck Close: Up Close* (DK INK, 1998) and Samantha Abeel's *My Thirteenth Winter: A Memoir* (Orchard, 2003).
10. Connect instruction with the students' interests, background knowledge, and personal goals, and employ problem-based learning to show them that the task is practical in the real world.
11. Teach to the student's strongest modalities.
12. Help students use mnemonic devices to learn and retain material.
13. Help students learn to monitor their own learning (Pannucci & Walmsley, 2007).

Practices frequently used with secondary students who have learning disabilities include teaching generalized learning strategies (such as note-taking, test-taking, outlining, and study skills), putting greater emphasis on multimedia presentations of material than on lectures or textbooks, and making provisions for alternatives (such as oral instead of written tests).

Students with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)

Attention deficit disorder (ADD), a form of learning disability, can occur with or without hyperactivity. ADD is most common among elementary school children and tends to slow down by adolescence. The child with ADD is likely to:

1. Be inattentive and unable to remain "on task"
2. Become impatient while waiting for his or her turn during games
3. Blurt out answers to questions
4. Fidget with his or her hands or feet
5. Be easily distracted
6. Turn in careless or incomplete work
7. Talk excessively and interrupt others
8. Lose things necessary for school tasks (e.g., pencils, books, assignments)
9. Engage in potentially dangerous acts without considering the consequences (e.g., darting into the street without looking)
10. Shift from one activity to another without completing anything

Since this disorder occurs in about 3% of children, you are likely to have an ADD child in your class—one who constantly disrupts the class and has several of these 10 characteristics. A guidance counselor or your mentoring teacher may have some suggestions for dealing with such a student. The following ideas can also be helpful:

1. Reward the student for remaining on task and completing work.

2. Set up study carrels or private areas where the student can work without distraction.
3. Keep lessons short.
4. Use progress charts and contracts.
5. Maintain positive behavior supports and ignore inappropriate behavior whenever possible.
6. Stick to schedules and routines.

HELPING AT-RISK STUDENTS

Educators often use the term *at risk* when referring to certain students. What does *at risk* mean, and what can you do to help these students?

At-risk students lack the necessary skills for succeeding in school and later life. They are likely to become dropouts, runaways, delinquents, or teenage parents. Family or societal conditions are generally the reasons why students are at risk; these include:

- Homelessness
- Abuse
- Poverty
- Unstable family situations
- Immigration, involving students who have trouble adapting to the language and behaviors of typical classrooms in the United States
- Persistent health problems and malnourishment
- High rate of absenteeism

These students will need a great deal of support and understanding. Although you may not be able to become directly involved in such issues as a student teacher, here are some ways you may be able to help.

- Be a good listener.
- Intervene when you sense a problem developing.
- Offer encouragement for efforts.
- Give positive reinforcement to build self-esteem.
- React sensitively to situations.
- Visit homes or meet with caregivers to understand family situations, if possible.
- Assign a buddy or a tutor to a student who needs help.
- Develop a sense of community within the classroom so that all children feel welcome and respected.
- Provide opportunities for achieving success.

PROVIDING FOR STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

Some students have visual, auditory, or other physical disabilities. Students with visual disabilities should be encouraged to wear corrective lenses as appropriate, should be seated in positions that allow them to see visual displays clearly or given enlarged printed material, and should be given opportunities to learn through auditory and kinesthetic modes. Students with auditory disabilities should be encouraged to wear hearing aids as appropriate, should be seated where they can hear instruction clearly, and should be given opportunities to learn through visual and kinesthetic modes. Students with other physical disabilities should be provided with adaptive materials and assistance to allow responses to be given in alternative formats. Some can be helped by computers with special software; others may need to have paraprofessionals to assist them in completing activities.

Literature depicting students with physical disabilities in a positive light can help such students gain self-esteem. The literature should not have the disability as its primary focus, but should give individuals with physical challenges a chance to show what they are capable of doing. They are neither hailed as superheroes nor treated as helpless victims (Landrum, 2001). A few books that you might want to try are:

Banks, Jacqueline T. (1993). *Project Wheels*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (character in a wheelchair)

Barasch, Lynne. (2004). *Knockin' on Wood: Starring Peg Leg Bates*. New York: Lee and Low. (character with a leg amputated)

Bertrand, Diane Gonzales. (2004). *My Pal, Victor/Mi Amigo, Victor*. Sacramento, CA: Raven Tree Press. (character in a wheelchair)

Blatchford, Claire H. (1995). *Nick's Mission*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner. (character who is deaf)

Bloor, Edward. (1998). *Tangerine*. New York: Scholastic. (character who is visually impaired)

Chaconas, Dori. (2006). *Dancing with Katya*. Atlanta: Peachtree. (character with leg braces)

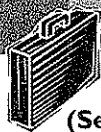
Clements, Andrew. (2002). *Things Not Seen*. New York: Philomel Books. (character who is blind)

Condra, Estelle. (1994). *See the Ocean*. Nashville, TN: Inclusive Books. (character who is blind)

Creech, Sharon. (2003). *Granny Torrelli Makes Soup*. New York: HarperCollins. (character who is visually impaired)

McCully, Emily Arnold. (2008). *My Heart Glow*. New York: Hyperion. (character who is deaf)

Sachar, Louis. (2006). *Small Steps*. New York: Delacorte Press. (character diagnosed with cerebral palsy)



FOR YOUR PORTFOLIO

INTASC Standards: 2, 3

(See page 19)

Write a case study of a specific student who may be at risk. Describe ways you tried to encourage and support the student.

INCLUSION

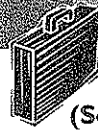
Inclusion refers to including students with special instructional needs in the regular classroom. In an inclusion classroom, students with disabilities remain in the regular classroom for the entire day, and specialized teachers come into the classroom to provide support services. Because students with special needs are now being integrated into regular classes, you will probably be responsible for a number of students with exceptionalities. (See Chapter 13 for the legal and ethical issues connected with including individuals with disabilities in regular classrooms.)

Multiple assessments and appropriate documentation are used by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team to assess the strengths and challenges of students with special needs. IEP teams are composed of the student's teacher, one or both of the parents, and a representative of the local education agency (other than the teacher). The team may also include the student and additional professional personnel, and you may also be invited to participate.

A student's team develops an IEP plan, which provides assessment information, as well as classroom modifications and instructional plans that you should know about when you work with these students. The plan will probably include items such as the student's present levels of educational performance and learning style, annual goals, short-term instructional objectives, specific educational services needed, date when those services will begin and length of time the services will be given, and evaluation of the student's ability to meet goals and objectives.

The following ideas may be useful in teaching included students:

1. Build rapport with the students. Let the students know that you are genuinely interested in helping them overcome difficulties. A comfortable, relaxed atmosphere also enhances rapport.
2. Make a plan for alleviating their difficulties as much as possible. Tailor instruction to meet the needs of each individual student, and relate instruction to each student's learning characteristics and potential. Different approaches may succeed with different students, so you must be familiar with many different approaches and flexible in your use of them.
3. Adjust the length of the instructional sessions to fit the students' attention spans. In fairly long sessions, you will need frequent changes of activities.
4. Learn the students' interests and use them as the focus of your instruction. A student will tend to put forth much effort to master a particular concept or skill that relates to a special interest.
5. Give authentic, meaningful assignments and emphasize the values and usefulness of completing tasks.



FOR YOUR PORTFOLIO

INTASC Standards: 2, 3

(See page 19)

If you have the opportunity, be a member of an IEP team. Include a copy of the IEP, with the student's name deleted, that you helped to create.

It is important that all students feel accepted as a part of the regular classroom. One teacher used literature to help build community in her class by reading aloud books that focused on respect for and acceptance of people who are different from themselves. She led discussions of these books to help the students make personal connections with the literature. She also structured time when students had the opportunity to work with each other. To promote discussions of appropriate and inappropriate behavior and the consequences of different types of behavior, as well as discussions of inclusion and exclusion of people, the teacher read aloud such novels as *Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key*, *Holes*, *Mandy*, and *Crow Boy*. These experiences helped the students grow in knowledge and community in her classroom (Fu & Shelton, 2007).

Special education teachers and other personnel can offer you help when you work with students who have special instructional needs. A paraprofessional may be available, and peers, either students from the same classroom or students from higher grades, may act as tutors.

Case Study 4.6 shows how one teacher planned for differences among students in his classroom. After you read it, complete Activity 4.2.



CASE STUDY 4.6

Planning for Differences

Mr. Hernandez, a student teacher, is planning a study of the Civil War for his American history class. He is aware of the need to adjust instruction for varying achievement levels and personal needs. He plans to encourage several advanced students to read widely and present information to the class in the form of reports, panel discussions, and dramatizations.

Some students will read chapters from the textbook and search for answers to a list of questions that will be incorporated into a quiz show game to be played in class. Mr. Hernandez will prepare study guides to help these students focus on particular information.

ACTIVITY 4.2 | Modifying Lessons for Students with Special Needs

Briefly outline a lesson plan for a subject you are teaching. Identify the essential concept(s) to be taught. Include the materials needed for the lesson. Specify the assessment procedures you plan to use to determine progress of student learning.

How would you modify this plan for the following students? (You may consider other types of diversity, particularly those of students you are teaching.)

Students with Hearing Impairments:

Students with Visual Impairments:

Students with Limited Use of English:

Learners Who Are Academically Challenged:

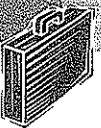
Students Who Are Gifted in Various Areas:

Several students who learn more slowly will use some easy-to-read books and other supplementary materials to prepare for a group discussion about the Civil War. They will also view a video as part of their study. Mr. Hernandez will assign a student tutor to help when difficulties arise.

During this theme study, Mr. Hernandez plans to place students in cooperative learning groups with each group consisting of an academically gifted student, a student who learns more slowly, and two or three students of average abilities. Working as a team, these students will investigate different aspects of the Civil War and share their findings with the rest of the class. Musically and artistically talented students will also be included in as many groups as possible.

Some students will read about Harriet Tubman and role-play her efforts in freeing the slaves. Slave anthems will be learned and sung as part of the role-playing. One student with ADD will work on short, sequential assignments, with a specific "date due" schedule. Mr. Hernandez will help Felipe, a student who is visually impaired, by providing audio recordings and asking a proficient reader to read key information aloud to him. In these and other ways, Mr. Hernandez hopes he has made appropriate adjustments for the needs of the students in the classroom.

1. What is your opinion of the way Mr. Hernandez adjusted assignments to meet differing needs?
2. What additional ideas can you suggest for meeting individual differences?



FOR YOUR PORTFOLIO

INTASC Standard: 3 (See page 19)
Put your lesson plan from Activity 4.2 in your portfolio. Comment on the success of your adaptations for students with special needs.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What conditions could cause problems in developing good relationships with your students? How might you work to overcome these difficulties?
2. Are there any special problems in developing good relationships with students of racial or ethnic groups different from yours? What are they? How can they be overcome?
3. What will you do if:
 - a. You are a student teacher for second grade, and an apparently bright and curious Vietnamese boy, who speaks no English, is in your class. Your mentoring teacher has ignored him, letting him entertain himself during lessons.

The boy's father, an engineering student at a university, speaks broken English. The boy's mother is free during the day, but she speaks only a few words of English. No one in your school speaks any Vietnamese.

- b. You are student teaching in sixth grade. A girl in your class comes from an impoverished home with no running water. The child's clothes are filthy. Her face and hands are encrusted with grime, and she smells bad. The other students make fun of her and refuse to sit next to her.
4. A student teacher in a secondary school located in an area with little racial diversity wrote the following entry in her journal of reactions to daily events at school: "Students from other countries were visiting the school for some FFA event. One of my students walked out in the hallway (before class) and spoke to a visiting student, using a racial slur. I'm so tired of all these racial problems. They seem to get worse and worse." How should she have handled this situation?
5. The student teacher in Question 4 was told by her supervisor, "You could approach a situation like this by asking the student to put himself in the other person's place and think how the remarks would make him feel."
 - a. Do you think this advice would work? Why or why not?
 - b. What other advice could have helped her to deal with such a situation?
6. How could you identify the following types of students: (a) gifted; (b) learning disabled; (c) culturally diverse?
7. Consider one subject area. How would you challenge the gifted student?
8. How can you consider the needs of culturally diverse students in the instructional program?
9. What are your responsibilities toward students in an inclusive environment?
10. How can you and special resource personnel cooperate to ensure the best program for students with special needs?
11. In the ninth-grade history class where you are a student teacher, a student named Roberto speaks fluent Spanish but refuses to try to learn more than the small amount of English he already knows. Many of the other students are Mexican Americans like Roberto, but unlike him, they are learning English rapidly. When it is time to give a test on the unit you have been studying, Roberto is the only one who has difficulty reading the questions. What would you do? Would you translate into Spanish for him (assuming you can), read the questions to him in English, or let him do the best he can with the test on his own? Explain your answer.